

## IS J-SCHOOL WORTH IT?

### EVALUATING CONVERGENCE STUDENTS' PREPARATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

Converged media is the present and future of the journalism industry today. Knowing how to write and edit no longer seems to be enough. Journalists must be a jack-of-all-trades, and journalism schools seem to be one, if not the only, path to achieve success in the industry. The research component of this project looked at the changing skill sets of recent graduates to determine how effective the University of Missouri School of Journalism is in preparing students for future industry success.

Semi-structured interviews found that continual education is needed to stay relevant in the industry, but that the journalism school had prepared convergence graduates with the basics for initial success in their first jobs. While most participants had already transitioned away from “pure” journalism into public relation-type fields, the majority of knowledge and experience gained at Mizzou was seen as invaluable in the participants' careers.

As part of the project, a professional skills component was also conducted at *The Wichita Eagle* for 12 weeks in the summer of 2012. The full-time internship involved general assignment reporting and resulted in 74 clips, including one multimedia piece.